

Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Fact Sheet

Great Run, Fauquier County

What is a TMDL? Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) is a term used to describe the amount of a pollutant that a stream can receive and still meet Water Quality Standards. A TMDL Study identifies sources of pollution and reductions needed to attain standards. A TMDL Study considers both **point sources**, such as residential, municipal or industrial discharges, and **nonpoint sources**, such as residential, urban or agricultural activities. The Virginia TMDL program is governed by a federal court order consent Decree, which lays out a schedule for TMDL development through 2010.

What is Virginia's Bacteria Water Quality Standard? Virginia's Bacteria Standard (9 VAC 25-260-170) states *E. coli* levels in streams shall not exceed 235 colony Forming Units per 100 milliliters of water. This standard supports Virginia's goal that all streams meet primary contact recreational uses. Currently, Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) monitoring teams are collecting monthly bacteria samples.

Why is a TMDL being prepared for Great Run? The goal of the Clean Water Act is that all streams should be suitable for recreational uses, including swimming and fishing. **Fecal coliform and Escherichia coli (E. coli) bacteria** are used to indicate the presence of pathogens in streams supporting the **swimmable use goal**. Bacteria in Great Run exceed the fecal coliform criterion. Great Run was first listed as impaired in 1998 based on DEQ monitoring indicating that the swimmable use goal was not being met.

How often does Virginia list "Impaired Waters"? Virginia submits a list of impaired waters to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in even-numbered years. A list was not submitted in 2000. Statewide, there were 656 stream segments impaired by one or more pollutants on the 2002 list of impaired waters. A TMDL and Implementation Plan must be developed for each impaired stream segment and pollutant. The 2002 list is available on the DEQ website at <http://www.deq.state.va.us/water/303d.html>.

What section of Great Run is impaired? Approximately 2.76 miles of Great Run is impaired. The impairment begins at the confluence of an unnamed tributary to Great Run and ends at the confluence with the Rappahannock River. This segment is identified in Virginia's 1998 and 2002 303(d) TMDL Priority List and Report as impaired due to violations of the State's water quality standard for bacteria. A small map is provided below. More detailed maps will be available at public meetings.

How will the public participate in TMDL development? Two formal public meetings are planned as part of the TMDL development process. The first meeting was to be held on January 26, 2004 to inform the public about the impairment and the TMDL process, and to obtain public comment, but was canceled due to weather and will be rescheduled. The **second public meeting** is scheduled for **summer 2004**. Additional small meetings can be held with stakeholders, upon request, to ensure the information used in the study is accurate. A draft TMDL will be made available for public review and comment prior to submittal to EPA. Public meetings will be advertised in local newspapers, through direct mailings, and in the Virginia Register.

What happens after the TMDL is completed? The Great Run TMDL will be submitted to EPA in **Summer 2004**. Upon EPA approval, a **TMDL Implementation Plan** can be developed to bring the impaired water body into compliance with Water Quality Standards. Implementation Plans include a schedule of actions, costs, and monitoring. Implementation Plan development may begin at any time after EPA approval of the TMDL.

What are the expected benefits of the TMDL and Implementation efforts? Implementation will work towards restoring the beneficial use of the stream, making it fishable and swimmable in accordance with the goals of the Clean Water Act, and cost-effective management practices will be identified and implemented first.

What are the roles of DEQ and DCR in developing TMDLs? TMDL development is a collaborative effort between the Virginia Departments of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and Conservation and Recreation (DCR.) DEQ develops water quality standards, monitors water quality, identifies impaired waters, and develops TMDLs. DCR is Virginia's lead non-point source pollution management agency, helps develop TMDLs, and develops implementation plans. Information on DEQ and DCR programs, including information on TMDLs, may be found at www.deq.state.va.us and www.dcr.state.va.us.

Whom may I contact to comment on or learn more about the Great Run TMDL? Kate Bennett, Department of Environmental Quality, 13901 Crown Ct., Woodbridge, VA, 22193, telephone (703) 583-3896, fax (703) 583-3841, or e-mail kebennett@deq.state.va.us.

